



AN INTEGRATIVE AYURVEDIC APPROACH TO PALLIATIVE CARE IN CANCER SURVIVORS: DIET, MEDICINE, AND ANATOMICAL PERSPECTIVES

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ABSTRACT :

Background:

Cancer survivorship often entails long-term physiological and psychological challenges due to chemotherapy, radiation, and surgery. These may result in chronic fatigue, tissue depletion, digestive dysfunction, pain, and immune compromise.

Objective:

This review explores Ayurveda's role in palliative care for cancer survivors through dietary protocols, herbal medicines, anatomical insights, and therapeutic practices.

Methods: A thorough analysis of contemporary research publications and traditional Ayurvedic texts was carried out. Evidence of anatomical and pathophysiological understandings, dietary habits, and treatment regimens that were helpful for cancer survivors' palliative care were among the criteria.

Results: A comprehensive framework for comprehending post-cancer issues is offered by Ayurvedic concepts including Dhatu Kshaya, Srotorodha, Ojas Kshaya, and Marma correlations. Pain, exhaustion, and emotional health are addressed by integrative methods such as Rasayana, Panchakarma, and Satvavajaya Chikitsa.

Conclusion:

Ayurveda offers personalized, all-encompassing methods that enhance contemporary cancer treatment techniques and have the potential to greatly enhance cancer survivors' quality of life.

Keywords: Dhatu Kshaya, Ojas, Marma Therapy, Rasayana, Ayurveda, Cancer Survivorship, Palliative Care.

1. INTRODUCTION

With higher survival rates drawing attention to long-term issues like fatigue, immunological suppression, cachexia, and anxiety among survivors, the worldwide burden of cancer is rising. While integrative systems like Ayurveda offer complete therapies designed to restore tissue health, immunological balance, and psychological wellness, conventional palliative care frequently concentrates on symptom management [1].

Through the interrelated systems of Doshas, Dhatus, Agni, Ojas, and Srotas, Ayurveda explains illness and recovery [2].

These ideas are consistent with current knowledge of immunological integrity, hormone regulation, and metabolic pathways. For instance, Srotorodha denotes blockage in body pathways, similar to lymphatic obstruction, whereas Dhatu Kshaya represents tissue loss as observed in cancer cachexia [3].

The morphological and pathophysiological mechanisms seen in cancer survivors are correlated with Ayurvedic palliative techniques that emphasize nutrition (Ahara), medicine (Aushadhi), and therapies like Panchakarma and Marma.

2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

Using contemporary publications indexed in PubMed, Scopus, and the AYUSH Research Portal, as well as traditional Ayurvedic texts (Charaka Samhita and Sushruta Samhita), a narrative review was carried out. "Ayurveda," "Cancer Survivorship," "Rasayana," "Marma Therapy," "Palliative Care," and "Ojas" were among the keywords. Criteria for

Inclusion: Ayurvedic cancer treatment with a clinical or conceptual focus Articles that relate physiological and anatomical concepts to palliative care Studies on Ayurvedic treatments for cancer survivors

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 *The Pathophysiological and Anatomical Framework*

3.1.1 Kshaya Dhatu

Dhatu (tissues), particularly Rasa, Rakta, and Mamsa, degenerate as a result of cancer treatments. In contemporary oncology, this is comparable to cachexia [4].

3.1.2 Srotorodha

Srotas obstruction impairs waste removal and nutrient flow. Symptoms such as lymphedema and constipation reflect this [5].

3.1.3 Kshaya Oja

The essential element that promotes mental stability and immunity is ojas. Survivors experience fatigue, anxiety, and decreased immunity as a result of its depletion [6].

3.2 *Nutritional Measures (Ahara) Dietary*

Recommendations from Ayurveda are based on Vikriti (imbalance) and Agni (digestive fire).

For those who have survived: Light, easily digested foods: Barley, rice, and green grams [7]

Substances that promote Ojas: Milk, jaggery, and ghee [8]

Immunonutrients: turmeric, amla, and pomegranate [9]

These aid in replenishing Ojas, nourishing Dhatus, and restoring Agni.

3.3 *Herbal Medicines (Aushadhi)*

Ayurvedic herbs offer antioxidant, adaptogenic, and immunomodulatory qualities.

Withania somnifera, or ashwagandha, increases vitality and lowers stress [10].

Tinospora cordifolia, or guduchi, boosts immunity [11].

Asparagus racemosus, or shatavari, promotes hormonal balance and tissue regeneration [12].

Rasayana and antioxidant qualities of amalaki (Emblica officinalis) [13]

These herbs repair tissues, boost immunity, and combat weariness

3.4 *Therapeutic Methods*

3.4.1 Treatments for Panchakarma Detoxification such as Basti

(enema), Nasya (nasal therapy), and Shirodhara (forehead oil flow) are used to eliminate toxins, restore Agni, and calm the mind [14].

3.4.2 Marma Therapy

Vital points (Marma) correspond to neural and vascular junctions. Stimulating these points relieves pain, enhances circulation, and improves nervous function [15].

3.4.3 Satvavajaya Chikitsa

Mental health therapies including counseling, meditation, and yoga support emotional regulation, enhance resilience, and reduce depression and anxiety [16].

3.5 *Integration with Modern Care*

Ayurvedic protocols can be safely integrated alongside chemotherapy or radiotherapy with proper supervision. They address long-term issues like immune dysfunction, fatigue, digestive imbalances, and psychological distress [17]. Combined use of Rasayana drugs and diet improves tolerance to modern treatments and promotes recovery [18].

4. CONCLUSION

Cancer survivors face significant physiological and psychological stress post-treatment. Ayurveda offers a time-tested, individualized, and holistic approach to palliation through its anatomical and therapeutic doctrines. Interventions based on Rasayana, Panchakarma, and dietary regimens can complement conventional treatments by enhancing immunity, restoring tissue health, and improving emotional stability.

Further research is required to standardize Ayurvedic protocols and ensure evidence-based integration into oncology care models.

Further research Clinical trials on Rasayana herbs in cancer recovery must be encouraged.

Standardized protocols combining diet, Marma therapy, and Panchakarma need formulation.

Collaborative integrative clinics should be promoted for survivorship care.

Patient-reported outcome measures (PROMs) should be used to validate the effectiveness of Ayurvedic therapies in improving quality of life.

Interdisciplinary research combining Ayurveda, oncology, and neuroscience can uncover more profound mechanisms of recovery and develop evidence-based integrative models.

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